

GSA Attacks Paperwork Problems on Capitol Hill

Like the rest of us, Congressmen find themselves engulfed in paperwork. They must write letters; write reports; edit verbatim proceedings of hearings; and maintain files of letters and facts of interest to their constituents.

To assist Congressmen in handling their paperwork problems, the National Archives and Records Services, General Services Administration, keeps one of its analysts available to Congressional offices on a continuous basis.

Here are some of the many paperwork management improvements instituted on Capitol Hill during the past few years:

Guide letters are used to answer many communications, especially those requesting action on legislation. Many of these guide letters, in turn, have been set up on punched paper tape for use in high-productivity automatic typewriters.

The National Archives and Records Service has recently published filing guides for use by Members of the House, the Senate, and the various Congressional committees. These guides contain subject headings for a filing system, provide for a "city file" that Congressmen can take with them on trips to their constituents, and tell the Congressmen how to retire files to a Federal Records Center.

An endorsement system is used to refer letters to the Executive Branch. These endorsements are usually form letters, and provide for a direct reply from the Executive agency to the constituent.

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A "folding room" provides each Congressman fast services in stuffing and enveloping large mailings. Congressional letterheads are now standardized as are most of the file supply items. This makes it possible for mail and stationary services to be provided with maximum economy.

Requirements for filing space have been reduced through the introduction of one-carbon-copy letter writing, the elimination of cross-reference sheets, and the removal of files to Federal Records Centers.